

Willits Weekly

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A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

Donations Accepted Edition No. 399

Thursday, April 22, 2021

WUSD's Westerburg leaving after 5 years

Joanne Moore
Reporter
joanne@willitsweekly.com

After five years on the job, Willits Unified School District's Superintendent Mark Westerburg has chosen to leave at the end of this school year.

In some ways, the reason for his departure is similar to the reason he came to the job in Willits in the first place.

"When I first moved here five years ago, I had a son in Portland and a son in San Diego," he said. "After a couple of years of being here, they both moved to Minnesota where my other two sons are. So all four of my kids live in Minnesota.

"It's just, this is a family move totally. It has nothing to do with ... the job. It has nothing to do with living in Willits. I enjoy Willits," he said. "It's a family decision. My wife hasn't seen her four kids in a year and a half, and they all live in the same general areas right around Minneapolis.

"I love what I'm doing here," he said. "I think we're making good progress.... Got a bond issue that's fixing things. We're headed in the right direction.

"The bond issue will

Read the rest of
Leaving
Over on Page 4

38% of students back at WHS

Joanne Moore
Reporter
joanne@willitsweekly.com

It's not like it used to be, but kids are back in classrooms, and everyone's glad.

Lots of big repair and replace jobs that have needed to be done on school buildings for a long time are getting done.

That, and more, was discussed at the April 14 meeting of the Willits Unified School District's Board of Trustees.

"Happy days are here again," said Willits Teachers Association President Tessa Ford. "We have kids back on campuses, and they are thrilled, and teachers are thrilled."

"The high school reported that they had all grade levels present, and that about 38 percent of their population is attending in-person class," said Ford.

Also, some high school sports are back.

"Just like in other things, we didn't jump back and do every single sport we can do," said superintendent Mark Westerburg. "We did the sports that were more conducive to COVID [safety] than things like wrestling

Read the rest of
WHS
Over on Page 11



Above, from left: Quail Seeds' "Peace Vine" tomato starts will be one of the many available at the Commonwealth Garden's upcoming plant start giveaway on May 8 and 9. Asian greens are growing well in the established beds at the garden. Pepper starts will also be available during the upcoming event at the Commonwealth Garden. Below: Garden Manager Mellisa Bouley holds two tomatoes in the greenhouse where the team is cultivating over 2,000 starts to give away to the community.



Photos by
Maureen
Jennison

Plant Start Party

Over 2,000 starts available for free to community on May 8 and 9 at Commonwealth Garden

If anyone gets the "green thumb" award, it's Mellisa Bouley and crew down at the Commonwealth Garden, just west of Adventist Health Howard Memorial by the picturesque gazebo near Haehl Creek.

The greenhouse, and the gardens for that matter, are stocked with all sorts of flora, all ready to either get planted in the newly floofed beds, or to come home with members of the community.

For the second year in a row, planters have kicked into overdrive, making sure more than 2,000 veggie and flower starts will be available to offer some coronavirus relief, helping people plant and provide their own food.



At top, left: The new green growth dots the tops of many plant pots, all which will be leaved out and ready for distribution by the May 8 and 9 giveaway event. At top, right: Seedlings and small starts get some time out of the hoop covers for fresh air and more light.

Above, left: Sunflower seeds are still stuck, clinging to their last moments on the leaves of the new sprouts. Above, right: The orchard at the top of the hill by the gazebo is doing well also, with apples, cherries and peaches coming later.

At left: 18-year-old Ethan Fisher is on his fourth season interning for the Commonwealth Garden. His grandmother, Robin Pilatti worked for HMM for years, and Bouley loved the "legacy" connection.

Photos by Maureen Jennison

Supes put off pot decision to April 27

Forrest Glyer
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Near the end of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors special meeting on Monday that spanned more than 11 hours, four out of five supervisors seemed to make it clear that they supported the controversial increase to 10 percent of parcel size for cannabis cultivation in specific zones and sites in the county.

Nothing was passed Monday, but supervisors directed staff to bring a draft of the new cannabis ordinance – still often called "Phase 3" but specifically titled "Chapter 22.18" by the county – for further discussion and possible approval next week on April 27.

Third District Supervisor John Haschak was the only one to stand firmly against the 10 percent expansion.

"I just wanted to be clear that that's not consensus, that I don't agree with this," said Haschak. "I'm going to side with the people, and the water districts, and the law enforcement, and environmental groups, and everyone else who's opposed. And the people of Mendocino County who are opposed to this. So it's not

Read the rest of
Decision
Over on Page 11

Newsom visits Lake Mendocino to declare drought

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Gov. Gavin Newsom held a press conference in Lake Mendocino Wednesday afternoon, the arid lake bed serving as a demonstration of "unprecedented" water conditions in the Russian River watershed.

"I'm standing currently 40 feet underwater – or should be 40 feet underwater, save for this rather historic moment," Newsom said on April 21, referring to Lake Mendocino being only at 43 percent of capacity.

Gov. Newsom announced he'd declared a targeted drought emergency, for Mendocino and Sonoma counties, "where reservoirs are at record lows following two critically dry years, and accelerated action may be needed to protect public health, safety and the environment," the press release for the event reads.

"There's no mandates – today – on water consumption," Newsom said at Lake Mendocino. "Just encouragement and

Read the rest of
Drought
Over on Page 4

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

No to logging in JDSF

To the Editor:

The logging of 200-year-old redwood trees by Willits Redwood Company has begun in Jackson Demonstration State Forest right now! The redwoods bring in tourism that supports our whole economy, not just one or two logging companies.

Redwood trees calm winds, create microclimates and prevent soils from drying out during our current and projected historic droughts by shading the soil and conserving water. Redwood trees (especially older trees) provide desperately needed homes and habitat for spotted owls, martens, civet cats, marbled murrelets, flying squirrels, chipmunks and so many endangered species. Some animal and plant species that are not officially on the "endangered list" are still near extinct in our Mendocino Coast and need our immediate protection!

Additionally, the redwoods provide a highly beneficial resource as a place for locals, seniors, children, tourists, backpackers, mountain bikers, trekkers and athletes to walk in and be inspired by. Redwood trees and healthy intact forest have been proven to efficiently capture fog and mist on their needles, causing it to condense and then fall to the forest floor, helping to refill our precious aquifers and reduce the damage to our vital ground water supplies being affected more and more each year by climate change.

Redwood and other large/long-lived trees need to become protected from logging and cutting for "national security" reasons due to the forests' amazing abilities to sequester massive amounts of carbon and to filter toxins out of the air blowing in from China and Asian countries. Not only do our forests filter toxins directly out of the air, the trees and healthy soils actually make fresh oxygen.

Scientists have now proven that the healthy microbiome blowing through established forests benefits human health in many ways. In a time of COVID-19 and other possible viruses/pandemics, these healthy combinations of beneficial microbes, spores and bacteria have been shown to boost humans immune systems and general health when inhaled. Our forest can help reduce the spread of viruses and other diseases!

The Jackson Demonstration State Forest makes no sense in its current form. Demonstrating "sustainable logging of redwood" has become obsolete now that so many viable options exist and are being used to replace the use of redwood around the world. Let redwood decks and siding be made from recycled poly products, agricultural crop waste, even hemp.

Over the last four years Mendocino County has lost over 1,000,000 acres or over 1,500 square miles of trees and forests to wildfires. We desperately need every bit of forest that remains! The forests are far more valuable as recovering, healthy organisms, than they are as mere board feet and profits for a few wealthy logging company CEOs and shareholders.

We need to transition this precious "barely recovering forest" into a permanent preserve now! There has never been a time when it was needed more – the time of logging these poor abused forests in Mendocino and throughout Northern California needs to come to an end.

These forests have been struggling to recover for the last 100 years and now with climate change and record droughts, they are more fragile and struggling than ever. I have lived in Mendocino County for 20 years now, and have witnessed year after year the trees and forest getting weaker, large trees literally shrinking in size from severe dehydration and dying in massive numbers from drought. It has broken my heart, and now with the wildfires, we have lost closer to 1.5 million acres or over 2,000 square miles of trees in just our county alone.

The time to create forest preserves wherever we can has come, the time is now! Let's start by turning Jackson Demonstration State Forest into the "true" demonstration it deserves – a demonstration of how well a forest can regenerate without logging and destruction. So many more jobs could be created than through mere greedy/short-sighted logging by starting forest restoration projects and companies. This will make the forests healthier and more fire-resilient! Let the wild, be wild again.

In honor of our trees and forests.

Max Meyers, Willits

Willits Senior Center Lunch

Drive-Thru & Walk-Up Meals

The Willits Senior Center is continuing to provide drive-thru, walk-up and delivered meals, although the dining room is closed. Prices for drive-thru and walk-up To Go lunches will remain at \$5 through June 2021, thanks to funding from the Community Foundation and Sparetime Supply. Meals on Wheels delivered meals remain at \$5.50. Call 459-6826 for more info.

Drive-thru and walk-up To Go meals are available 12 to 1 pm, Monday through Friday. Pickup is outside the Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road.

Home Meal Delivery

The Senior Center Meals on Wheels delivered meals are \$5.50 per meal. Call 459-6826 the day before needed to schedule home meal delivery; Monday through Friday. Delivered throughout Willits.

Thursday, April 22: Paprika Chicken, Rice, Veggie, Roll, Green Salad

Friday, April 23: Roast Beef w/Celery, Potatoes, Carrots, Gravy, Roll

Monday, April 26: Ground Beef Burritos, Rice & Beans

Tuesday, April 27: Chili Baked Potato with Sour Cream, Cornbread, Green Salad

Wednesday, April 28: Bacon Ranch Crispy Chicken Sandwich, Baked Beans, Mac Salad

Thursday, April 29: Country Fried Chicken, Mashed Potato, Veggie, Roll, Green Salad

Friday, April: Turkey w/Stuffing, Gravy, Veggie, Cranberry Sauce, Roll

Transportation for seniors: Call 459-5556 to schedule. Pick up and drop off for grocery shopping, banking, doctors' appointments.

Waldorf School of Mendocino County Super Raffle!!

In lieu of the Waldorf School of Mendocino County's annual Auction/Gala, this year we are having a Super Raffle!

There are 12 fabulous prize packages (each valued between \$400 to \$1,000); from Garden and Home Improvement packages (including 12 tons of gravel), Coast Getaways, to Children's Loot, to Mendocino Wines, there's a prize that everyone will enjoy.

Each prize package will be drawn separately on Friday, April 30 during the WSMC May Faire. Need not be present to win. With so many prize packages, the chances of winning are very good!

Buy more tickets to save and increase your chances of winning!

1 ticket for \$5

5 tickets for \$20

11 tickets for \$40

30 tickets for \$100

Buy tickets from a WSMC student or online at www.mendocinowaldorf.org

Read more about the prize packages and the school at: <https://www.mendocinowaldorf.org>

– Submitted by Waldorf School of Mendocino County

Mendocino Cannabis Program info session on April 29

The County of Mendocino Cannabis Program will be holding an informational session for the public via Zoom on Thursday, April 29, from 3:30 to 5 pm. We will be covering the following topics:

- Communications with MCP
- Application Resubmittals
- Appendix G Checklist
- Sensitive Species Habitat Review & Contiguous Expansion Affidavit
- Compliance & Correction Notices.

If you have questions related to the topics listed, please email them to cannabisprogram@mendocinocounty.org by 5 pm on April 27, 2021.

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Brooktrails board OKs employee agreement

Brooktrails Board President Rick Williams asked Director Tony Orth if there had been any reactions regarding Orth's letter to the county board of supervisors (printed in Willits Weekly's April 8 edition). Orth said that he'd received no direct response from the BOS but expected it would be a discussion item at the next meeting of the Mendocino County Association of Fire Districts.

Brooktrails Director Tina Tyler O'Shea announced: "Mendocino Council of Governments are updating their Mendocino County regional transportation plan and active transportation plan and are conducting virtual needs assessments. And, Mendo Safe Roads, another MCOG plan for road safety – the project team has developed some interactive online mapping tools to identify traffic safety issues throughout the county."

Visit <https://www.mendocinosaferoads.com/> to learn more, to report an area of traffic safety concern, and to see the Collision Map. The map shows color-coded collisions that occurred in the County of Mendocino from 2015 to 2019. Click each color dot to get details about the accident.

Director Tyler O'Shea also discussed a public health initiative, the Blue Zones Project. "There will be an opportunity for the public to participate in kickoff events in each of the districts to provide input regarding establishing healthy communities through the Blue Zones Project in Mendocino County. Adventist Health and community leaders have been working to develop partnerships to bring the Blue Zones project to Mendocino County."

she explained. "Blue Zones are places where entire communities live longer, healthier lives."

A motion was made by Director Orth and seconded by Director Ed Horrick, and the board voted to unanimously approve the Accounts Payable in the amount of \$94,868.12.

The board then considered Resolution 2021-04 Establishing a "Three-Year Employee Agreement, Salary Schedule, Wage Ranges and Fringe Benefit Plan for All Employees, Retirees, and Officers for the District."

General Manager Tamara Alaniz summarized the changes to the agreed-upon employee agreement: A 2 percent raise for the next fiscal year, a 2 percent raise the following year, and no raise the third year. A 1,000 hour vacation cap was also agreed upon. The board voted to unanimously approve the resolution, and all agreed with President Williams that "they had no complaints whatsoever regarding any and all employees." "Kudos to all!" Williams said.

Williams said, "Kudos to all!"

Alaniz described details of "Resolution 2021-05 Amending the Township Policy Manual. "There's been an addition of fire department positions to the plan," she said. "New amended wage range charts are also included, and the policy manual is now consistent with the employee agreement as it should be."

Director Tyler O'Shea made the motion to approve the changes to the policy manual, and Director Ed Horrick seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to approve the changes.



At left: The HazMobile has been operating in Mendocino County for close to 25 years.

Above: Caustic or poisonous liquids are collected in specific barrels.

Below: One customer's collection of paint and other materials is loaded onto a cart. Jeep DeLapo, lead technician, inspects the barrels. A customer fills a rolling cart with her hazardous materials while socially distancing.

Hazardous Wastes

Please don't throw those batteries, fluorescent bulbs, pharmaceuticals, weed killers, etc. in the trash – protect the environment and drop them off at the HazMobile

Hazardous wastes can be found in most houses. They are a byproduct of modern life. These substances do not belong in landfills, where they can pollute the environment or leach into the water or eventually the ocean. In order to provide a safe and convenient way for people to dispose of their hazardous-waste materials, Mendo Recycle out of Ukiah, brings their HazMobile to various locations throughout Mendocino County to allow people to clean their homes of materials which can affect both their health and the health of the environment. This is a free service for residential customers.

"We're here to make sure the hazardous waste doesn't end up in the landfill," explained Jennifer Lombardi, general manager of Mendo Recycle. "We take fluorescent tubes, batteries, oil, fuel, under-the-sink common waste, weed killer, acids, bases, all the above. We will take flares but no explosives or ammunition. Ammunition goes to the police. We do take pharmaceuticals and 'sharps.' We have bins at the sheriff's station and some pharmacies which we will empty. We take all the coolant from the transfer stations."

"[Mendo Recycle] started back in 1993. Mike Sweeney started our hazardous-waste facility back around 1991," Lombardi continued. "He started the mobile collections sometime in the first couple years. Mendo Recycle has been around for 25 to 26 years. We're a JPA (Joint Powers Authority) that is represented by the city and the county. We have a board that is made up with five members, one from each of the jurisdiction cities: Willits, Ukiah, Fort Bragg, two representatives from the county, supervisors."

In addition to running the HazMobile program, Mendo Recycle is further responsible for roadside and homeless-encampment cleanups, especially needed in the fall when itinerant cultivation workers come into the county. "We do more than just collect hazardous waste. We are the illegal dump cleanup for the county. We pick up any dumps we find on city or county roads," said Lombardi.

"I go out once a week canvassing the county," she said. "People also call them in. There are certain places that are hotspots so I know where to focus where there are common dumps. Each city has its own special spots. It doesn't matter what kind of waste it is. If it is illegally dumped, we pick it up. We are also the county recycling hotline. If anybody has questions about recycling, they can contact us. We are also working towards helping with homeless-camp cleanups. When the homeless camp, they usually leave a mess. Right now, we have a grant which the county is applying for to have us help with Covelo. It's a major problem over there. For the time being, mostly what we do are roadside cleanups."

Once the trash and hazardous waste has been collected, it is distributed to the proper facilities for disposal. The waste goes from their facility in Ukiah and gets shipped "through ACTenviro. They pick up our waste every two weeks usually. Some goes to incineration, some of it gets recycled. None of it ends up in a landfill," explained Lombardi.

"We also do the tire amnesty for the county," Lombardi said. "People can bring up to nine tires a day, up to 17 inches with no rims, for free. As long as we can get the grant, we will continue to do the tire amnesties. We can save people a lot of money. We have an amnesty coming up in Willits May 27 through May 29. It will be on Franklin Street at the transfer station."

Jeep DeLapo, lead technician, further explained the mission of the HazMobile. "People are bringing in their household hazardous waste, sprays, Roundup, oil, gas, antifreeze, anything that's flammable. All their paint, latex, acids, solid and liquid poisons, butane, propane. It all gets sorted into different labeled bins. Our solid poison goes into a plastic drum. The liquids go into a metal drum. Propane goes into a plastic drum. Anything flammable goes into metal drums. We wrap household batteries in plastic. Everything has a designated area."

When asked the strangest material he ever received, DeLapo laughed and said, "We got three buckets full of baby pigs in formaldehyde. That was kind of a shocker. We had to take them. We didn't

Read the rest of HazMobile Over on Page 9

Earth Day Celebration

Mariposa Market

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Photos by Mathew Caine



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Willits Weekly's
Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

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PUZZLE
ANSWERS
ON
PAGE 9

HOW TO
SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

FOOD GARDEN WORD SEARCH

P	R	Q	A	N	K	E	S	U	L	P	K	T	C	W	P	E	S	L	T	H	Y	K	M	E	L	I	O	S
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AMEND	CUCUMBERS	PEAS	SPINACH
BASIL	EGGPLANTS	PEPPERS	SQUASHES
BEANS	FRESH	PICK	STRAWBERRIES
BROCCOLI	HEALTHY	POTATOES	THYME
CARROTS	LETTUCE	RADISHES	TOMATOES
CORN	PARSLEY	SOIL	ZUCCHINI

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50						51							

CLUES ACROSS

- Switches
- Legal financial term (abbr.)
- Sweeties
- Competition
- Measures electrical resistance
- Psychotherapy researcher
- Causes injury to
- Open
- Polish peninsula
- Hebrew calendar month
- Whale ship captain
- Children's accessory
- Unknown point
- Exists
- Extremely confident
- Expression of disgust
- The government has many
- Small constellation
- Northern Indian city
- The best pitchers
- Naturally occurring

solid

- Apple computers
- Portuguese city
- Ancient Greek war dance
- More reliable
- Sailboat
- Newspapers
- Frequently flooded area
- They dig for coal

CLUES DOWN

- Partial
- 'Mad Men' leading man
- The ___ of March
- Healthy
- Where golfers begin
- Soviet Socialist Republic (abbr.)
- Of the cheek
- Injury reminder
- Statesman Franklin
- For an unknown reason
- Brain parts
- Islamic calendar month
- Avenue where ad men work

- Possesses
- Accept
- Stake
- Former British PM May
- US battleships circa 1939
- Greek alphabet letter
- When you hope to get there
- Top lawyer
- Fiddler crabs
- Intolerant
- Persons that cause extreme fear
- Car mechanics group
- Capital of Ghana
- Famed ballplayer Hank
- Emphasizes insignificance
- Light-colored
- Distinctive smell
- Muckraking journalist Jacob
- Sunscreen rating
- Short-term memory
- Japanese delicacy
- One point north of due east

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICE LOG

April 12 to April 18

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled **161 incidents** in this seven-day reporting period.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

April 12

11:09 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1600 block of South Main Street.

April 13

3:24 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 200 block of Redwood Avenue.

6:50 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

7:29 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

7:38 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 1200 block of South Main Street.

7:54 am: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 33000 block of Bertha Keys Way.

9:47 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 1200 block of Locust Street.

1:36 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance near the intersection of Alder Lane and South Main Street.

2:36 pm: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 800 block of Railroad Avenue.

4:58 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

6:43 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 300 block of Creekside Drive.

10:40 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of Alder Court.

April 14

1:22 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism near the intersection of Muir Lane and West Commercial Street.

1:41 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 300 block of Creekside Drive.

April 15

8:35 am: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 100 block of West Valley Street.

The rest of
Leaving From Page 1

continue on for another 10 years [paying for] additional stuff that they can continue to fix," he said. "I took on the big projects ... so all of those will be done and up and running."

Some other noteworthy accomplishments under Westeburg's tenure include transforming Sanhedrin High School from a continuation high school to an alternative high school with an emphasis on graduates with technical certifications and good job prospects, reinstituting adult education, changing the high school from a semester to a trimester school year, and getting about 7 acres of district-owned property at Blosser Lane school rezoned so it can be sold if the school board chooses to do so.

"It's a good district," said Westeburg. "Obviously, like most businesses there are places to get better at, and when you're a school, it always centers on getting better with students."

Getting better at "improving our scores in math and language arts and making sure that all kids can read by the end of the third grade ... that's still on the table," he said "That's one thing we didn't get to. This last year and a half kind of set us back."

Next year Westeburg will find himself superintending a district even smaller than Willits, Crystal Lake, "about an hour and a half from Minneapolis," in Minnesota.

"I just want to thank the Willits community for embracing me and my wife and allowing me to help the school and be part of the school and [for] passing the bond issue," he said. "It's a wonderful place to live."

The superintendent's job has "been posted, and they are taking applicants," he said.

Choosing who that will be is a process, and the school board has called a special meeting, May 5, to publicly discuss it.

10:31 am: Officers responded to a report of harassment in the 200 block of North Main Street.

1:04 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 200 block of East Valley Street.

1:06 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1200 block of Magnolia Avenue.

2:18 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

6:15 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

8:20 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of Wood Street.

9:41 pm: Officers responded to a report of threats in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

April 16

9:03 pm: SUVAGIAN, Gregory Joseph (64) of Willits was contacted in the 200 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 23152 (A) VC (Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol), 23152 (B) VC (Driving with a Blood Alcohol Content of 0.08 percent or higher), and on misdemeanor charges of blood alcohol content of 0.15 percent or higher and disobeying a court order (contempt of court).

April 17

2:17 am: Officers responded to a disturbance near the intersection of Robert Drive and Blosser Lane.

9:55 am: SANDERS, Rhonda Rennee (60) of Willits was contacted in the 1100 block of Locust Street. She was arrested pursuant to 273.6 PC (Violation of a Protective Order) and 1203.2 PC (Violation of Probation).

3:48 pm: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

April 18

9:23 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the block of South Main Street.

12:47 pm: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 100 block of Alameda Avenue.

5:16 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity near the intersection of Holly Street and Locust Street.

The rest of
Drought From Page 1

now more support and resources for that effort to continue and to scale, and the opportunity for our ... local and regional leaders, to have the flexibility to meet the needs of this acute circumstance here in Mendocino and Sonoma counties."

Newsom also announced he'd be signing an executive order that afternoon, "around drought preparation" statewide, anticipating future drought declarations in other areas of California. According to the press release, this order "directs state agencies to take immediate action to bolster drought resilience and prepare for impacts on communities, businesses and ecosystems if dry conditions extend to a third year."

The lengthy Emergency Proclamation lists a number of specific steps; the full text can be read here: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/4.21-21-Drought-Proclamation.pdf>

On Tuesday, April 20, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors voted 4 to 1, Second District Supervisor Mo Vulheren dissenting, to declare a local drought emergency in the county. The request for the BOS to declare a drought emergency was brought forward by CEO Carmel Angelo, who cited the urging of CalFire Mendocino Unit Chief George Gonzalez as a reason to ask the supervisors to act.

Newsom was introduced by state Senator Mike McGuire at the Wednesday press conference, which got significant coverage from the state press. "Lake Mendocino is the canary in the coal mine when it comes to California's drought," Senator McGuire said. "The alarm is sounding, and it couldn't be louder. What you see around us, and why the governor brought us here, it's part of our immediate future, not just for the North Coast but throughout the Golden State."

Newsom mentioned the 200 acre Turnout Fire south east of Ukiah, CalFire Mendocino Unit's first "named" fire of the year, one of six fires CalFire and local fire agencies responded to from April 17 to 19.

"I can assure you wildfire, not just water, is also at the top of our agenda," Newsom said.



Team Rubicon

Disaster-response volunteers work to clear defensible space and remove downed trees from January snowstorm in Brooktrails

It takes a village, or more precisely, it takes multiple villages to protect those who live in environmentally hazardous areas from fire, floods and other natural disasters. Team Rubicon, an international team of disaster-response volunteers, consisting mostly of military veterans and first responders, recently came to Willits in order to help mitigate the heightened fire conditions caused by down trees and limbs from the January "Snowmageddon."

Local Fire Safe and Firewise councils joined them in the effort and local merchants generously donated meals and other signs of hospitality, in order to make their stay and work memorable and as pleasant as possible, as well as to show the town's appreciation for the hard work the team was performing to ensure a safer upcoming fire season.

On Tuesday, March 16, David Henry of Team Rubicon visited, along with Keith Rutledge of Sherwood Firewise Communities, several Brooktrails homes that had been strongly affected by the downed trees to see if it would be feasible for the team to venture up to the community, spend a few days engaged in cutting, bucking, trimming, and generally helping in mitigating the combustible fuel surrounding homes in a 100-foot defensible space. Although Team Rubicon has, in the past, been involved in disaster relief, they have recently engaged in defensive protocols to relieve the conditions that may lead to environmental problems.

According to its website, Team Rubicon has, in the last 10 years, had "785 field operations worldwide, 1,212,383 hours deployed in response to disasters, and 29,765 volunteers trained in disaster-response tactics." Volunteers have even included Prince Harry, a veteran of the British Royal Navy and Air Force.

Team Rubicon's mission is "providing relief to those affected by disaster, no matter when or where they strike. By pairing the skills and experiences of military veterans with first responders, medical professionals, and technology solutions, Team Rubicon aims to provide the greatest service and impact possible.

"Through continued service," the mission continues, "Team Rubicon seeks to provide our veterans with three things they lose after leaving the military: a purpose, gained through disaster relief; community, built by serving with others; and identity, from recognizing the impact one individual can make. Coupled with leadership development and other opportunities, Team Rubicon looks to help veterans transition from military to civilian life." As such they provide services on many levels.

The team of veterans is used to working in less-than-comfortable conditions, pitching tents where necessary, living outdoors, and generally roughing it. Due to the generosity of local concerns, Team Rubicon was able to eat well – pizza from Flying Dog Pizza, salads from Mariposa Market, refreshments from the Northspur Brewing Co., amongst others. Golden Rule, who owns the complex at the apex of the ridge on Highway 101, allowed the team to stay at the White Deer Lodge, which was partially reconditioned through the efforts of Sherwood Firewise volunteers. The Ridgewood Fire Safe Council helped greatly by finding merchants to donate items and meals, as well as assisting in identifying areas of need in their location.

"They're bringing in a group of folks," said Rutledge, "to work here for the next three days in Brooktrails, Pine Mountain, and the Walker, Shafer Ranch, Ridgewood area. There's so much to do. They're not going to be able to do it all. We prioritized mostly in Brooktrails. We're working around homes to clear the 100-foot defensible space. There are quite a few of those. Pine Mountain and Walker Ranch have quite a bit of access road work to do. They have only one way in and out and they need to clean some of those roads out."

The Team Rubicon volunteers came from various locations in California. Craig Cooper, who was working at John Lemmer's property as well as the green space behind, said, "I've been with Team Rubicon for four years, half a dozen states. We've done fires in California, Iowa tornadoes, Florida floods, Houston rebuild when they had floods. The longer you've been with Team Rubicon, the more places you've probably been and the more people you've helped out. I do this because I love helping people who can't necessarily help themselves."

Cooper came to Willits from the Sacramento area. He was teamed up with Katie Camerlengo of San Carlos in the Bay Area. She joined Team Rubicon because her sister is a first responder and Camerlengo felt she needed a way to give back as well.

Team Rubicon also provides a training platform for its volunteers. There are many levels of "sawyers" who have the

Read the rest of
Rubicon Over on Page 9

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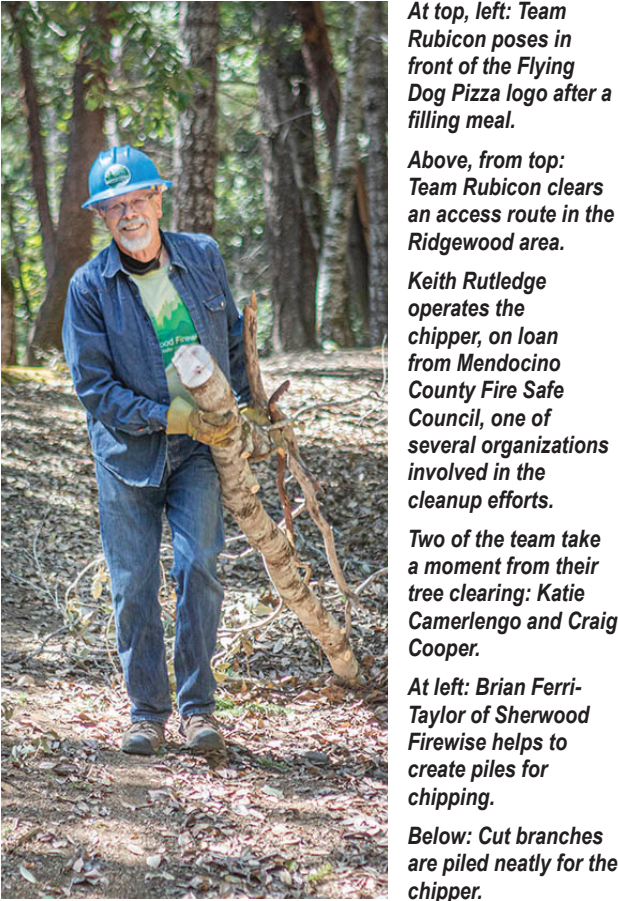
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At top, left: Team Rubicon poses in front of the Flying Dog Pizza logo after a filling meal.

Above, from top: Team Rubicon clears an access route in the Ridgewood area.

Keith Rutledge operates the chipper, on loan from Mendocino County Fire Safe Council, one of several organizations involved in the cleanup efforts.

Two of the team take a moment from their tree clearing: Katie Camerlengo and Craig Cooper.

At left: Brian Ferri-Taylor of Sherwood Firewise helps to create piles for chipping.

Below: Cut branches are piled neatly for the chipper.

SPIRITUAL
PATHWAYS

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www.agapebiblechurch.com

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•Spiritual Discussions
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25 Hazel Street, Willits
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10 a.m.
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Willits, CA 95490
Father Aaron Bandanadam
Mass times:
Confessions by appointment:
459-2252
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10:30 a.m. Spanish
Saturday Mass: 5:30 p.m.
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The Rev. Betsy Bruneau

St. John Lutheran Church
Karl Bliese, Pastor
Church Service:
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Bible Study / Sunday School
following the service.
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Willits Seventh-Day Adventist Church
399 W. Mendocino Avenue
707-459-5714
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<https://willitsca.adventistchurch.org>
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Tendergreen Burpless

Eggplant:

Diamond
Florida High Bush
Lista De Gandia
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Melon:

Watermelon
Cantaloupe

Peppers:

Ajarski
Anaheim
Canary
Glow
Jalapeno
Lemon Spice (Jalepeno)
Jimmy Nardello
Olympus
Pepperoncini
Pobiano
Sweet Sunrise
Stocky Red Rooster
Sugar Rush Peach
Yankee

Squash, summer zucchini:

Green
Yellow

Squash, summer scallop:

Mix – white, yellow or green
Yellow

Squash, winter:

Buttercup
Butternut, Honeynut
Butternut, Waltham
Delicata
Red Kuri
Queensland Blue
Spaghetti

Tomatoes, paste:

Amish Paste
San Marzano
Roma

Tomatoes, grape/cherry:

Brad's Atomic
Chadwick
Champagne Pink
Lucky Tiger
Peace Vine
Sungold

Tomatoes, large/heirloom:

Barred Boar
Black Seaman
Cherokee Purple
Classic Beefsteak
Dad's Sunset
German Striped
New Girl
Oregon Spring
Pineapple
Russian Black Krim

At right: More seedlings pop from their shells. Far right: Garden volunteer Shana Byrne moves the wheelbarrow to the next weed-picking spot.

Below, left: The expansive Commonwealth Garden is going strong. Below, center and right: Scott Selzer finds and plucks out offending weeds from the onion beds.

Photos by Maureen Jennison



The rest of Garden | From Page 1

distancing will be practiced. The sale will happen outdoors, and attendees are welcome to drive in and park inside the garden gate.

Some of the seeds were propagated on site by Bouley and the workers; other seeds came from Baker Creek, Quail Seeds and Johnny's Seeds. All have been grown with organic practices, no pesticides, and organic food and fertilizer.

In addition to the veggie starts, including potatoes and asparagus, flower starts including poppies, ornamental grasses, canna lilies, iris, and dahlias, as well as strawberries will all also be available.

The old Willits Cafe Century agave plant has also been popping up babies. Bouley joked that starts will also be available from that plant, which will offer the community a "chance to also plant a piece of legendary Willits history!"

Even though coronavirus has prevented the public from going into the Roots restaurant at Adventist Health Howard Memorial, the

patients and staff still get to enjoy the food being prepared there, and the garden is still providing fresh goods for the kitchen.

They are also donating food to the Caring Kitchen, the Willits Community Services and Food Bank, and donating starts to other farms, too, including several flats to the Willits Community Garden project. Bouley noted that they haven't heard from the schools yet, but she was excited at the chance to be able to partner with them again, too.

With soil temps warming up, Bouley noted that most plants could go into the ground close to the sale day.

"The average last frost day is May 15," explained Bouley. "Anyone wanting to help bulk up their plants can replant them into larger pots and keep them in greenhouses until they're ready to plant. Make sure to check the weather though, and cover anything that the frost might get for a little while once you get them in the ground!"

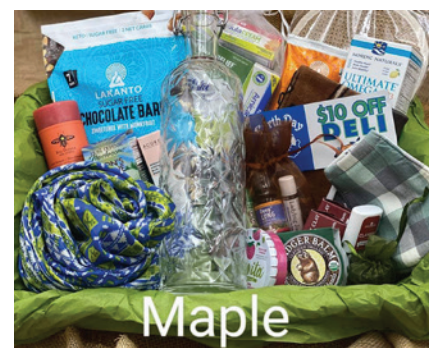
At right: Commonwealth Garden Manager Melissa "Lady Garden Princess" Bouley smiles in the apple blossoms.

Below: Garden Volunteer Quinton Bowles adjusts drip lines on some of the beds.

At bottom, from left: Bowles mans the tractor while other volunteers Shana Byrne and Scott Selzer pull weeds.

The hoops inside the greenhouse are filled with starts.

Lettuce starts are getting ready, too!



Mariposa Market celebrates Earth Day, April 23

It's Earth Day this Friday, April 23. Mariposa Market is having its annual Earth Day Celebration and Sale, featuring raffles for seven beautiful Gift Baskets full of earth-friendly products. Earn a chance to enter with 1 raffle ticket for every purchase this week.

Friday's sale offers a 25 percent discount in Mariposa's bulk and produce departments, and 20 percent off Klean Kanteen and Eco items.

Mariposa Market, 500 South Main Street, will also be giving away free bee- and butterfly-friendly seeds at checkout, and offering shoppers a battery and cell phone recycling station.

The first Earth Day was in 1970 and is considered "the birth of the modern environmental movement."

At right: Twenty-four 1-pound bags of marijuana for sale with packaging material were found in a vehicle that a deputy pulled over on North Highway 101 at the intersection of Black Bart Drive in Willits.

Four Florida men arrested after 24 pounds of marijuana found in vehicle

By Sergeant Mike Dygert for the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office

On April 16 at about 2:30 am, a Mendocino County Sheriff's deputy conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle at the intersection of North Highway 101 at Black Bart Drive in Willits.

The deputy made contact with the driver, Tomas Valencia, 22, from Riverview, Florida, and three other male passengers in the vehicle. The passengers were identified as Camilo Valencia, 28, from Riverview, Florida; Ali Khan, 22, from Tampa, Florida; and Alvin Valliaril, 22, from Seffner, Florida.

The deputy detected the odor of marijuana / cannabis coming from inside the vehicle and visually observed loose marijuana remnants in the vehicle.

A search of the vehicle was conducted and the deputy located two dozen 1-pound bags of processed marijuana / cannabis and packaging material to ship the marijuana via United States Postal Service.

None of the occupants had any sales invoices or shipping manifest allowing them to lawfully transport commercial quantities of marijuana / cannabis.

All four individuals were arrested for the listed charges and transported to the Mendocino County Jail.

In accordance with the COVID-19 emergency order issued by the State of California Judicial Council, bail was set at zero dollars and all four individuals were released after the jail-booking process, on their promise to appear in court at a later date.



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PORTRAITS FOR PETS
 ANNUAL FUNDRAISER FOR HSMC
 4/16 - 5/10



Above: Sarah Johnston's recreation of HSMC's one-and-only Dugen!

It's time for
 Portraits for
 Pets 2021!

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County is ready for the second year of their 100 percent virtual fundraiser Portraits for Pets!

This is the same great fundraiser they held last year where for just \$25, the community can send in a photo of their pet, and have the photo recreated by one of any of the participating artists.

Artists vary in medium, age and skillset, but returned images are always a joy to see and a fun surprise for the pet owner.

The fundraiser will run from Friday, April 16 through Monday, May 10.

Submit your photos to: <http://bit.ly/donor-view> and register for the event. Only photos submitted through this link will be used.

A few things to note: If you have more than one pet you want drawn, please donate \$25 per pet. They can be in the same photo if you want!

If you want the same picture drawn multiple times, please donate the appropriate funds and let them know with an email to Fundraising@HSMC.org so they can assign your photo to multiple artists.

Do you want to be a volunteer artist? Email Fundraising@HSMC.org to get in touch with the "Artist Coordinator" Manina.

For more information or to help answer questions on the process, contact Fundraising@HSMC.org.

– Maureen Jennison

Furry Friends Hoping for a Home

Independent Chaplin

We don't think this handsome guy will require much! He will probably be content with a window bed, where he can sunbathe and watch the birds fly by, and a loving human to give him his much-loved meals every day. Chaplin, who is 3 years old, is not a very cuddly cat, and will probably stop by while you are on the couch watching TV every now and then for a few pets (or for some of your snacks), but then go on his merry little way until he is in need of attention again.

Chaplin loves his food, and can probably stand to lose a little weight, so we don't recommend free-feeding with this guy. Though he may vocalize his opinion about how often he needs treats and how many breakfasts he should have, he will need a strong-willed human who will not give in to his pleading and begging.

Due to his independent personality, we think he would do best in a home without any other cats or children (of course thinks he needs all the attention).

For more about Chaplin or to see the Mendocino County Animal Shelter's canine and feline guests, and for information about services, programs, events and updates about COVID-19 and the inland shelter, located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, visit: www.mendocinoshelter.com. For information about adoptions, please call 707-467-6453.

Best Buds
 Xena and Bruno

Look at all this cuteness! Meet Xena (brown) and Bruno (white). These two are a bonded pair and just the best. Xena is 5 years old and Bruno is 6 years old. However, the both of them still act like joyful little puppies. These two have a sad story to share. They were surrendered to us due to their owner passing away. Both sadly passed within a year of each other. Our hearts break for their families, and for Xena and Bruno.

We want nothing more than to help them find a forever home together to help ease their heartache. They love each other dearly and we would love to honor their parents' last wishes of them staying together. They have gone through enough loss without losing each other also. Xena and Bruno deserve all the love in the world to help mend their broken hearts, help them cope with their loss, and help them to start their next chapter in life. You may apply to love Xena and Bruno today at www.mendocinohumane.org.

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County, 9700 Uva Drive in Redwood Valley, is open Wednesday through Friday from 1 to 5 pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 3 pm, by appointment only, for intakes, adoptions and fostering. For information or any questions, call 707-485-0123 or, for cats, you may email catteam@hsmc.org and, for dogs,

you may email dogteam@hsmc.org. Visit www.petfinder.com or the "Humane Society for Mendocino County" page on Facebook to see available dogs and cats, visit www.mendocinohumane.org to learn more.

Goofy Hoss

Hoss is one good-looking dog who is a mix of Anatolian shepherd and cattle dog. He's a big boy at 74 pounds and would love to have a yard and active people to be with. Hoss is a big goof, a happy dork, an affectionate play buddy who is just over 2 years old. He is gangly and gregarious, he doesn't need as much exercise as one would think, though he is happy to do so if his human wants to take him out to run and play. When not engaged with his person, he would rather be inside than out, at least that is his MO at the Milo Sanctuary. Alone in a yard is not his preferred pastime – but in his room he is a happy camper, playing with toys and lounging.

Hoss is decent on leash, pulling a bit initially, but he settles down and walks well. He is learning not to jump up, as he tends to be overzealous when first seeing his people. Some ongoing training and socialization with other dogs would be good. He loves every person he meets, though may seem protective through a fence. Though usually his tail is wagging a mile a minute!

To find out more about Hoss, who is currently living at the Milo Foundation Sanctuary in Willits, or to view other adoptable animals, visit www.milofoundation.org or the Milo Foundation Sanctuary Facebook page. The sanctuary is currently doing pet adoptions by appointment only due to COVID-19. Please complete a pet-adoption application before requesting an appointment. You can reach the Milo Foundation at 510-900-2275.



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WW319

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Willits will conduct a public hearing, on April 28, 2021, at 6:30 P.M. to discuss future applications for funding under the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and to solicit citizen input on possible activities to be included in future CDBG applications. After discussion, the City Council shall consider adoption of a resolution approving application for funding and the execution of grant agreement and amendments thereto from the Community Development Block Grant Program - Coronavirus Response Round 2 and 3 (CDBG-CV 2&3) Funding NOFA Dated December 18, 2020 as well as possible carryover funds from the Coronavirus Round 1 (CDBG-CV 1), and existing City CDBG Program Income (PI). Said application will be for an amount not to exceed \$549,250 to provide small business financial assistance to city businesses to help mitigate impacts of the COVID-19 economic downturn.

Eligible activities paid for with State CDBG-CV funds must benefit low and moderate-income households and provide assistance to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Future CDBG programs must benefit low and moderate-income households.

The purpose of the public hearing is to give citizens an opportunity to make their comments known regarding what types of eligible activities the City of Willits should apply for in the next available and additional future opportunities under the State CDBG program as well as comment on the proposed funding application.

In order to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the City of Willits is currently conducting public meetings pursuant to the provisions of the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20, which suspended certain requirements of the Brown Act and the way the public can participate during the public meetings. Participation in the public meeting will be allowed pursuant to applicable Executive Orders at the time of the public meeting. Participation is expected to be through electronic means as posted on the City Council meeting agenda for the April 28, 2021 regular meeting. This allows the City to adhere to social distancing requirements, follow the Governors' Executive Order N-29-20 and provide a way for the public to provide public comment live during the meeting.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE: The City of Willits encourages all interested parties to participate in the Public Hearing and to comment on the issues being discussed. Members of the public may participate and provide public comment as follows:

•Written public comments regarding the proposed project may be submitted by email to Dusty Duley, dduley@cityofwillits.org or the City Clerk's office, 111 East Commercial Street, Willits, California, 95490, no later than 5:30 p.m., on Tuesday, February 23, 2021. All public comments received will be provided to the Council and uploaded to the City's website in advance of the meeting.

•Oral public comments may be presented to the Willits City Council via teleconference during the public hearing. To address the Council during the live meeting please find the meeting-specific link to the teleconference included on the agenda for the February 24, 2021 City Council meeting that will be posted on the City's website.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in the public meeting, please contact the City Clerk at (707) 459-4601. Notification at least 48 hours prior to the meeting will assist staff in assuring that reasonable accommodations are made to provide accessibility to the meeting.

/s/ Dusty Duley
 Community Development Director
 Posted 4/22/2021
 Publication Date: April 22, 2021



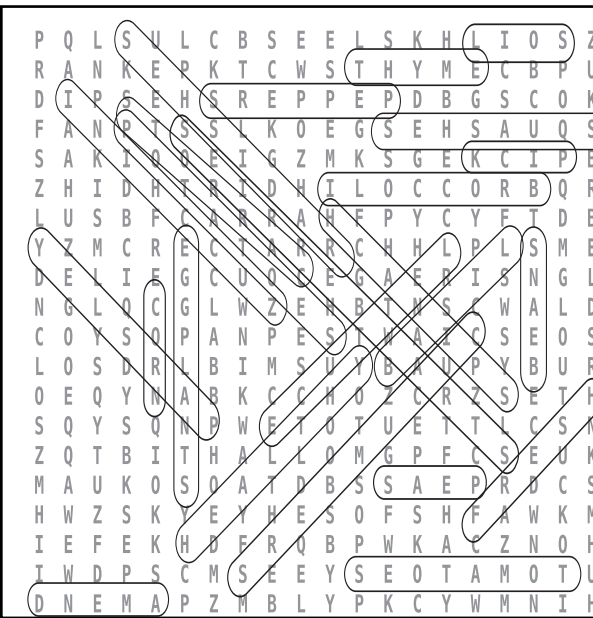
Current Job Openings:

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 Deputy County Counsel II/III/IV
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 Eligibility Specialist Supervisor
 Human Resources Manager
 Senior Planner

For a complete list of current job openings and to apply:

www.mendocinocounty.org/government/human-resources

EOE



LEGAL NOTICES

WW317

BROOKTRAILS TOWNSHIP
 COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
 NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Board of Directors of Brooktrails Township Community Services District will conduct a public hearing on the Financial Plan for Services – Budget, effective July 1, 2021.

The public hearing will be held remotely on Zoom at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, June 8, 2021. Information on remote access to the meeting will be provided on the meeting agenda at its time of publishing.

At this time and place, any interested person, including all people owning property in Brooktrails Township Community Services District, may appear personally or submit a written presentation on any matter relating to the proposed revisions.

The General Manager has submitted a proposed Financial Plan for Services – Budget for Fiscal Year 2021-22. The Financial Plan for Services – Budget would become effective on July 1, 2021.

A copy of the proposed budget is available for review during normal business hours at the Township Office, 24860 Birch Street, Willits, California or by request from btcsd@btcsd.org. Dated: April 14, 2021

/s/ Tamara Alaniz, General Manager/
 Secretary to the Board of Directors
 Publication Date: April 22, 2021

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WW318
 Fictitious Business Name
 Statement

2021-F0198
 The following persons are doing business as Reza's Breadery, 309 Sequoia Blvd., Willits CA 95490.

Registered owners: Reza and Debra Ghanmadan, 309 Sequoia Blvd., Willits CA 95490 / mailing address: P.O. Box 23, Willits CA 95490.

This business is conducted by a married couple.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on April 9, 2021.

/s/ Reza Ghanmadan
 Publication dates:
 April 22, 29 and May 6, 13, 2021

The rest of
 HazMobile

From Page 3

know what was in them when we took them in. We put them in the bulk fuel bin so they would get incinerated."

The program is free of charge for household contaminants. Businesses should call to make arrangements.

Upcoming dates for the Willits area for the HazMobile: May 21 and 22, October 22 and 23, 8 am to 2 pm, at the public-works yard behind the library, 380 East Commercial Street. Brooktrails has a pickup date on July 17, at the Brooktrails Community Center parking lot, 8 am to 2 pm.

The tire amnesty collection, at the Willits Solid Waste yard, 351 Franklin Street, is May 27 through May 29.

For more information, please go to: <https://mendocorecycle.org> or call 707-468-9710.

The rest of
 Rubicon

From Page 5

ability to fell trees, buck, trim, etc. Some of the advance teams may leave various types of projects for the trainees to work on during the period that they are in the area. The more advanced sawyers teach the ones who are just starting or are in different levels, thereby providing both job training and ensuring an ample cadre of skilled volunteers.

Keith Rutledge, along with other Sherwood Firewise volunteers, followed Team Rubicon up with a wood chipper, provided by the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council.

The team, buoyed by the generosity and welcoming attitude of the town, plan to return to continue the work that was begun last weekend, when they could only stay for three days. They hope to stay for around a week next time in order to further the work of creating defensible space around homes in Brooktrails and other nearby locations in preparation for the fire season.

To learn more about Team Rubicon, visit <https://teamrubiconusa.org>. For more information about Sherwood Firewise, visit www.sherwoodfirewise.org, or email info@sherwoodfirewise.org. To

volunteer, go to the website and click on the volunteer link. Information on the Ridgewood Fire Safe Council can be found at www.facebook.com/RidgewoodFSC.

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Willits Food Bank Open

Willits Community Services & Food Bank continues to distribute food, following COVID-19 safety provisions, to hungry families and individuals in the Willits area, with an increase in numbers served. The front office at 229 E San Francisco Ave is closed to the public, but the back door area is open for food distribution on Wednesdays and Fridays from 1 to 4:30 pm. Info: 459-3333; financial donations to WCS can be mailed to 229 E. San Francisco, Willits CA 95490.

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Mendocino County Museum presents nature observation challenge April 30 through May 2

Submitted by the Mendocino County Museum

Join the Mendocino County Museum as we participate in the City Nature Challenge 2021. The goal is to identify and document as many species as possible in our own backyard! Mendocino County's beautiful parks, beaches, mountains and rivers are teeming with special flora and fauna. Let's show the world how much nature is in Mendocino County. Observation period for City Nature Challenge 2021 runs Friday, April 30 through Sunday, May 2.

All you need to do is to take photos of the plants, animals, fungi, and other organisms you see in your backyard, local park, school yard, or in any urban, suburban or rural area in Mendocino County. Then upload your observations to iNaturalist so you can help document nature in Mendocino County. The goal is to learn more about our local biodiversity as we observe the variety of species that call this area home.

Stop by the museum on any of the three days to pick up a special scavenger hunt card and a complimentary copy of the "BirdSleuth Explorer's Guidebook" from our virtual

exhibit "Albatross: Life on the Wind and Sea." Families and nature lovers are invited to explore Commercial Street and the park areas surrounding the museum. Participants that complete one or more of the activities provided by the Mendocino County Museum will receive a special badge. Simply return to the museum and share your findings with staff to redeem.

The City Nature Challenge is organized on a global scale by the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County and the California Academy of Sciences. Join the project now to receive Mendocino County City Nature Challenge event updates.

For more information, please visit: the Mendocino County City Nature Challenge project, www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2021-mendocino-county, and the Global City Nature Challenge, <https://citynaturechallenge.org>. For hours and admission details or more information regarding this program, please contact the Mendocino County Museum at 459-2736 or visit our website: www.mendocinocounty.org/museum.

Great examples of the flora and fauna found in Mendocino County that City Nature Challenge participants might document include such regulars as: the bumblebee (above, left), California gray squirrel (above, right), wild lupine (below, left), and raven (below, right).



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Decision From Page 1

unanimous at all."

"I want to kind of make this clear, too, that I didn't just come up on my own on this," responded 1st District Supervisor Glenn McCourt, who supported the expansion. "There is a group of farmers here, certainly in the Ukiah valley, that are interested in having the option of being able to plant this crop, and that's why I support it."

Among the other guidance that the supervisors issued was to allow the increased cultivation levels in Rangeland zones in the county, but only on parcels which have previously been used for agricultural type purposes – showing such evidence as tilled soil, cleared land, and aerial photographs from the past.

The supervisors directed to not allow expanded grows in Upland Residential zones, so the only other zone which will really allow for the large-scale 10 percent of property size cultivation would be Agricultural if the ordinance passes.

The supervisors also directed staff to include a provision in the ordinance to not allow any new permit applications to begin operating in the county until next year, largely due to the drought concerns.

Fifth District Supervisor Ted Williams felt this was basically a technicality since based on when the new ordinance would be passed and the length of time of the permitting process, no permits would be issued until at least a year anyway, but the supervisors agreed it was good to send a message to the community that no new permits would be issued in 2021.

In other notable developments, a majority of the supervisors seemed to agree to have the new ordinance either ban or severely restrict the use of greenhouses with mature, flowering cannabis plants, and the use of water trucks for those who don't have a water source on site.

Both these directives came from suggestions put forth by McCourt, who had a memo with 10 suggestions which were taken up by the board following the public comments.

The greenhouse restrictions could potentially ban the "light deprivation" technique now commonly being used by many permitted farmers.

McCourt seemed particularly adamant that "hoop houses" and greenhouses be restricted if not altogether banned for the most part, due to "sustainability" issues and the blight of the public view.

"Any new grows are going to be sun grown, and we don't want to see any more mixed light cultivation in new sites," he said.

Williams and Second District Supervisor Maureen Mulheren did push back against McCourt a bit, saying they felt there should be more discretion put in the hands of county officials regarding such things as mixed light and indoor cultivation in use permit decisions moving forward.

"If we say no in the ordinance it's a complete block," said Williams. "If we leave it to the Planning Commission discretion, they can look on a site by site basis. And I think our goal should be transitioning thousands of farms that didn't attempt to transition getting into the legal system. Going forward we don't want them operating outside of a legal market."

"Certainly we don't want them to scale up," he continued, "but existing activity I think we want to try and find a way to bring them into compliance. So I would rather have the flexibility and leave it to the Planning Commission."

The new county cannabis director Kristin Nevada also questioned McCourt's assumption that the use of greenhouses really had much to do with sustainability.

"I'm hesitant to equate sustainability with the use of a structure or not the use of a structure because sustainability really has to do with your practices on the ground," said Nevada. "And how you treat the area that you're cultivating, the medium that you're using or you're implementing some sort of soil, how you are handling waste. And so I just I don't know that an open air cultivation model is going to improve sustainability. I

think looking at conditions around soil management are probably going to be much more effective in the long run for environmental health."

As there was at previous county meetings regarding this latest cannabis ordinance, hundreds of letters and several hours of public comments poured in to the meeting, which mostly consisted of those opposed to the ordinance, though there were many in support as well. Overall there were around 400 typed and written correspondence letters, and about six hours of public comment.

Those opposed or with strong concerns against aspects of the ordinance included California Department of Fish and Wildlife; Mendocino County Climate Action Committee; the Municipal Advisory Councils of Round Valley, Laytonville, and Redwood Valley; Mendocino County Sheriff's Office; Covelo Community Services District; Mendocino Cannabis Alliance; Willits Environmental Center; Round Valley County Water District; the Inland Mendocino County Land Trust; the Mendocino County Farm Bureau; and the Laytonville Water District.

Some of the main concerns by those opposed were the environmental impacts expanded cannabis operations could have, including on the county's shrinking water supply, the economic harm it could cause to small cannabis farmers, and the skepticism by many regarding the county's ability to implement an expanded system due to the dysfunction it displayed during the "Phase 1" cannabis permitting process.

The inefficiencies by the county during Phase 1 has been something which BOS cannabis ad-hoc committee members Haschak and Williams have both been pretty open in acknowledging.

"We do have a lot of people who have been trying very hard to get through this system, get through Phase 1," said Supervisor Haschak. "Certainly there are people who aren't providing all their information in a timely way, but at the same time the county needs to take responsibility for a lot of this, too."

Based on the discussions Monday, it sounded like there will be a window for those who applied in Phase 1 to re-apply for "Phase 3" before others are allowed when the application process opens, probably in the range of 30 to 60 days.

Among those opposing the new ordinance, the Covelo Community Services District letter was particularly notable since McCourt and others frequently refer to this area as the hardest hit by illegal cannabis cultivation.

"Our oppositions are multi-fold including concerns for public, water, and land health," said CCSD Board Chair Joe Gauder. "Our community is plagued with unprecedented criminal activity on a daily basis. This activity is notably related to the proliferation of cannabis cultivation in its current forms. To allow increased cultivation further jeopardizes the health and safety of the valley's residents. Our Sheriff's Department is currently unable to effectively maintain the safety needs of the valley, and to add an additional burden on them is simply unconscionable."

The supervisors did approve increased enforcement efforts against illegal cannabis grows last week, including a real-time satellite imagery surveillance program, though it's likely to take quite a bit of time for the new measures to fully go into effect.

The Willits Environmental Center had similar concerns to the CCSD.

"In apparent short-sighted haste and to avoid investing in an appropriate environmental analysis at the front end, the county has elected to use an exemption from [the California Environmental Quality Act] ... which will create an impossible burden for small commercial applicants as well as overworked staff and under-resourced regulators and law enforcement," stated Rachel Doughty, legal counsel for the WEC. This was the leadoff to a 13-page letter detailing the failings that she and the WEC saw in the new county ordinance.

County Planning & Building

Assistant Director Julia Acker Krog seemed to indicate that CEQA would be involved in the land-use permit process that would go into effect under the new ordinance.

"Each of these sites is going to be reviewed on an individual basis," said Acker Krog. "To determine their compliance with the CEQA impacts and whether or not there are impacts that are less than significant or need to be mitigated in order to be less than significant, or if they are significant and cannot be mitigated."

People who spoke in support of the new ordinance included representatives from Flow Kana, Henry's Originals. and Cannabis Business Association of Mendocino County.

The public comments began with comments from several Spanish-speaking workers at Henry's Originals, who all spoke on one call in favor of the new ordinance through a translator. They talked of their thankfulness to work in a safe, legal environment which offered health care and other benefits.

"I support the Phase 3 bill and 10 percent expansion bill because it brings more jobs for us as a community," said Huanit Felix Lizarra, who works at Henry's. "Working in a small company does not generate the same money we can make with large companies. I have worked in Southern California and Northern California in various industries, and today I work in a large legal cannabis company that pays me well and offers benefits."

Two Willits area residents with operations in the Little Lake Valley called in and voiced opposing viewpoints.

"I'm urging the supervisors to vote no on the expansion of cannabis production and on the land use ordinance as written," said Michael Foley, co-owner of Green Uprising Farm. "Agriculture is for food production first of all in a world in which Ag land is rapidly decreasing and population growing.... At a time of drought it's appalling to see the board and the staff scrambling to get this past to avoid a CEQA review."

"I live in the valley of Willits, and I'm a cannabis cultivator with a couple of cultivation licenses and a nursery license," said Keith Shuster. "And I'm in favor of Phase 3 expansion to 10 percent. We are a growing business here in Mendocino County. And we continue to work towards growing our business and expanding an economy in this county that can provide jobs, and can create a future employment for people here and can build up on an industry that we're lacking."

During the discussion by the supervisors on potential Rangeland grows, board chair Dan Gjerde worried about "threats" during public comments about potentially creating a ballot measure to overturn the ordinance, and urged the supervisors to be specific in what they would allow on Rangeland zones to avoid this.

Haschak himself said in his supervisor's report printed in Willits Weekly April 1: "If the BOS decides not to listen, then the people need to be able to vote on this issue."

Haschak and the Willits Environmental Center were listed as two of the sponsors of a "Say No To Big Grows" campaign which circulated before the BOS meeting, urging residents to contact their local representatives to vote no on the ordinance, which they said "threatens our ag and rangelands, our environment, our water supply, fire safety and our very way of life."

At the meeting, Haschak called on the county to follow through on more extensive environmental impact reports regarding the cumulative impact that cannabis permits in the new ordinance might have.

"When we hear from [the California Department of Fish and Wildlife] and the environmental groups that this expansion will have drastic effects on the environment, and we don't have a way to really measure and we don't have a tool to really look at those cumulative effects, then I think that's a real issue for us. And I don't see how we can move forward without dealing with the cumulative impact for the watersheds and for the people in the valleys who depend on this water.... It won't be easy, it won't be quick, but it will save us from getting into huge lawsuits in the future."

The rest of
WHS From Page 1

and football."

And high school graduation will be "much more similar to what we're used to," he said. "There were some things that people really liked from last year we have to continue to do.

"So there will be banners going up around town," he continued. "And we're still going to do our, it's not called a parade, it's called a processional. You don't block off streets."

Prom is also a possibility. "We're trying to put together a prom," said Westerburg. "We're talking about using the new barn at the ag farm ... because the doors open wide, [and] we'd have good ventilation."

And summer school will "be much more robust than in normal years. All the buildings are looking at summer school programs," he said.

He also described a "great program" run by Nuestra Alianza, which will "take over Blosser for most of July."

"We used COVID money to help fund their program so they can keep their hundred students," he said. "Their focus this year is math, which is awesome."

The one "remaining issue" which has yet to return to something resembling normalcy is "independent study students who chose independent study because distance learning wasn't working."

"We need to get them back into the classroom if they want to come back in," said Westerburg, who noted that under the new tier that the county was in "the 16 limit doesn't really apply anymore."

"I'm not advocating we're going to go back to 26 kids in a classroom," he said. "We may bump to 18 as long as the room is conducive to doing that. That would allow us to bring our independent study students back in.... They deserve the right to come back into session."

And being back in session raises the risk of infection, and that raises the issue of testing.

For staff, it's "super easy. If you haven't got tested, I recommend you go do it," said Westerburg. "You walk in. They give you your staff, and in 15 minutes you get a text message on your phone."

For students, it's not so simple.

For "right now ... if a student is symptomatic we offer the testing to the parent," said Westerburg. "We don't require it. We offer it."

Testing students on a regular basis as a screening measure is not current district practice, and Westerburg was not in a hurry to see that change.

"I'm not sure," he said. "I realize that other districts are starting to test students.... I'm lukewarm on it at best."

"The state covers [the cost] ... because they are really wanting to test students twice a week ... to keep the schools open," said high school vice principal Marian Lohne. "The charter school is now testing ... twice a week."

"It might slow down the start of the school morning. You're going to be pulling about eight people, two from each building, to do that," said Westerburg. "I'm more concerned that we keep our adults functioning."

He was also dubious that parents would embrace having their kids routinely tested.

"I think where it hits the fan ... is after [parents] read the consent form, they're going to think they're going into bypass surgery," he said. "When they find out that their information gets put in the federal database of COVID testing, they're not going to be real fond of that."

"What are we going to do if they refuse the test?" he said. "I don't know if we want to open up that can."

"It's not something that you can mandate," said Lohne. "I could just see, if the cases rise again, catching one or two cases

before they're in the classroom ... or before it spreads, would be beneficial."

"If we continue to trend well, I would lean heavily towards not doing it," said Westerburg. "If our trend starts to turn the other way, I think we ought to have the discussion."

Either way, the school buildings that students are rehabilitating are being fixed up at a furious pace.

"There's not a building that doesn't have something going on in it," said Westerburg. "It's going to take a lot of effort to get 1950s buildings into 2020, but we're getting a lot of the big stuff done."

"We're putting a bubble over the pool and putting storage sheds at the pool and at Brookside," he said. "And we will have all four of our major roofs done and the high school parking lot by early July ... a major feat."

"Baechtel now has science rooms ... sinks all work, lights have been changed, rooms painted, the power works," he said. "They're real science rooms."

Most of the funding for these projects has come from the sale of bonds authorized by voters last November, but Westerburg has been able to "supplement our bond by using COVID funds" for some sizeable projects as well.

"We're allowed to use COVID funding to enhance heating, cooling and ventilation," he said. "That's one of my goals, to make sure we look for all those available fundings to get these projects done ... without having to tap the bond to do it."

The COVID-funded projects so far have included "the high school heating and cooling, because there was no air exchange in the main building ... [and] 'ancient single-pane glass that runs down ... hallways ... at the high school, Baechtel, and Brookside ... that have been painted and don't operate very well.... We're going to take those out and put in windows that actually operate and open so we can have some air and breeze," he said. "It will make the outside of the building look better and increase the ventilation."

There is, though, one "last big project for the bond that's not going to happen this year," said Westerburg. "The west wing at Brookside ... we need to take those old portables out and put in four new classrooms and a bathroom."

"It can't get done this summer," he said. "I do have the drawings being done, and the site work prep ... will be in place so that project can start as soon as school ends next year."

Another sizeable future endeavor, this one academic, was introduced and promoted by board president Alex Bowlds at the end of the meeting.

"I'd like to see us throw resources at K-3 reading to assure that our kids, as they leave grade three, are on or above grade level at their literacy skills," he said, adding that he "had been contacted by a number of people ... on identifying ways to move forward with this."

"I'd like to extend this to be a district-wide conversation for how we can improve literacy," he continued. "I want to focus the resources in such a way that we know we're going to get success."

"Between COVID funding and learning loss mitigation funds, the state and federal governments seem to be figuring out that it's important to throw some money at education," he said. "It looks like on the horizon there's opportunity for significant change."

"I want to make sure that everybody has an opportunity to voice their ideas ... keep the conversation moving forward," he said. "Nothing is off the table, and I'm really determined that somehow we make a massive dent in how we handle literacy, especially at the younger ages, because I know it will pay off bigtime as we move forward."

Delicious Dining

Roland's Barbeque and Seafood Bistro gets back to serving gourmet dinners

Ray Roland and his wife, Sue, found their way to Willits – again for Ray – in 2013. Separately, they've been in the restaurant business, in some capacity, for 40 years.

Ree Slocum
Features Writer
willitsweekly@gmail.com

When the couple moved from Florida to Willits, they decided to open a restaurant. "We did a lot of cooking on our own. We're foodies and we love to eat," Ray said. "We're self-taught, pretty much. There's no professional schooling." Yet their experiences in the business made them gourmet chefs who have distinct talents for bringing together ingredients that please and excite the palate.

For a few years they owned and managed Roland's Bakery and Bistro. It was known as a breakfast and lunch restaurant serving coffee drinks, yummy morning and lunch fare as well as delicious baked goods from Ray Roland's brother's bakery, Roland's Bakery, later named Rollin' Dough. At that point the couple's restaurant was open six days a week.

"My brother sold Rollin' Dough a few years ago and that's when we decided to let go of breakfast and lunch. It was too much," Ray explained. They found that, by cutting back and serving dinners exclusively, they enjoyed it more and Roland's Barbeque and Seafood Bistro was able to stay in the black financially.

Then COVID-19 hit and the confusing roller coaster ride of changing regulations due to infection rates wreaked havoc on most businesses, especially restaurants. "It was nice when we could serve inside but then we got kicked outside," Ray said and told how frustrating it was since it was December and uncomfortable for their clientele. "We couldn't figure out how to do deliveries either. It was very complicated and our take-out wasn't robust enough. That's when we brought it to an end," he said. That was December 2020.

Roland's Barbeque and Seafood Bistro signs stayed on the planter boxes in front of the almost-abandoned eatery for three and a half months keeping hope alive for its patrons.

The chefs opened their doors on April 1 once the pandemic regulations loosened to the Red Tier. Currently, they can serve people inside and out. There are four tables available inside and six outside in a cozy configuration with an attractive barrier from the parking lot. It's created from planter boxes, decorated lattice, and privacy screens. The outdoor-dining space also has

heat lamps.

People were happy to have one of their favorite restaurants open again and the chefs felt much better and more in control. Having one shift, Thursday through Friday nights for dinners, made for a less-hectic working life.

Even so, Ray said that on some nights "we've been slammed! I think that's why we're only open three nights a week. We have an extra day so we're not pounded in those three days." Sue added, "And we sometimes run out of food. That's embarrassing."

The couple is hoping people will make more reservations, especially now with the limited seating. Calling ahead and hearing what the specials are can be very helpful and might ensure a diner in securing a favorite dish for dinner.

Roland's Barbeque and Seafood Bistro's menu offerings read right out of popular restaurants you'd find in bigger towns. When Willits Weekly visited Saturday night, the specials included: Duck a l'Orange – half a roasted duck stuffed with oranges, sprigs of thyme, bay leaves, coriander and salt; Cioppino – a spicy tomato seafood stew with clams, mussels, scallops, shrimp, fish, and the delicious delicate flavor of fennel seed to balance the palate; Pan-Seared Red Snapper over a roasted-corn hash with smoked tomato sauce, to name a few tantalizing dishes. They also have their numerous and varied regular menu options.

Friday night's server, Kim Lansing, bustled about answering the ever-ringing phone, explaining the enticing specials, taking pre-orders or seating people and waiting on them; serving drinks and food. Her efficiency, warmth and friendliness are welcoming additions.

The Rolands would like to bring back their Sunday brunch. It was a popular option in Willits' breakfast / brunch offerings. "Our Sunday brunch was always a really good day. We're thinking about doing them again if we could find another server. But if we can't find the help, we can't add the shift. It's such an odd place to be in," Sue lamented.

Find Roland's Barbeque and Seafood Bistro on Facebook as Roland's Bakery and Bistro for specials and an up-to-date menu.

The bistro is located in the Evergreen Village Shopping Center at 1726 South Main Street. Phone 707-841-3058 for reservations or to apply for Sunday-brunch wait staff.



At right, from top: A bowl of Cioppino, full of clams, mussels, shrimp, scallops and fish in a spiced red sauce with a sweet counter-flavor of fennel seed, was one of Friday night's specials. Meet chefs Sue and Ray Roland as they take a quick break in their kitchen at Roland's Barbeque and Seafood Bistro. Diners Peter Hubert and Nancy Wallace are happy the bistro is open again. They both ordered the Duck a l'Orange this time.

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Surf Market has made the commitment to power our store with Sonoma Clean Power's 100% renewable EverGreen electricity service.

I'm asking our local residents and business owners to join Surf Market in supporting clean, renewable energy by switching to EverGreen today.

Visit sonomacleanpower.org/mendonoma to learn how you can help build the clean energy future.

Surf Market and Sonoma Clean Power.
Partners in clean energy.

